

Jeffersonian Democracy

One American's Story

During the election of 1800, supporters of President John Adams and challenger **Thomas Jefferson** fought for their candidates with nasty personal attacks. For instance, journalist James Callender published pamphlets that warned voters not to re-elect Adams.

PRIMARY SOURCE

“In the fall of 1796 . . . the country fell into a more dangerous juncture than almost any the old confederation ever endured. The tardiness and timidity of Mr. Washington were succeeded by the rancour [bitterness] and insolence [arrogance] of Mr. Adams. . . . Think what you have been, what you are, and what, under [Adams], you are likely to become.”

—James Callender, quoted in *American Aurora*

Adams's defenders were just as vicious. Yet, in spite of the campaign's nastiness, the election ended with a peaceful transfer of power from one party to another.

A New Party Comes to Power

▼ **KEY QUESTION** How was the presidential election of 1800 resolved?

The 1800 election was a contest between two parties with different ideas about the role of government.

Election of 1800 The two parties contesting the election of 1800 were the **Federalists**, led by President John Adams, and the **Democratic-Republicans**, represented by Thomas Jefferson. Each party believed that the other was a threat to the Constitution and the American republic.

The Democratic-Republicans thought they were saving the nation from monarchy and oppression. They argued that the Alien and Sedition Acts passed by the Federalist congress in 1798 violated the Bill of Rights.



This campaign banner declared: "T. Jefferson President of the United States of America—John Adams no more."

Meanwhile, the Federalists thought that the nation was about to be ruined by **radicals**—people who take extreme political positions. The Federalists remembered the violence of the French Revolution, in which radicals executed thousands in the name of liberty.

When election day came, the Democratic-Republicans won the presidency. Jefferson received 73 votes in the electoral college, and Adams earned 65. But there was a problem. Aaron Burr, whom the Democratic-Republicans wanted as vice president, also received 73 votes.

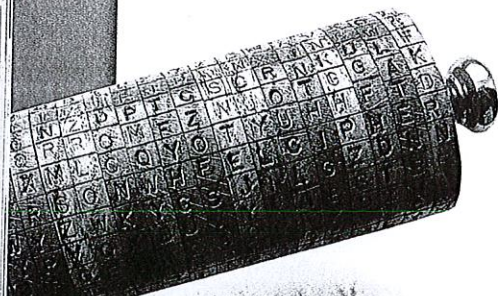
Breaking the Tie According to the Constitution, the House of Representatives had to choose between Burr and Jefferson. The Democratic-Republicans clearly wanted Jefferson to be president. However, the new House of Representatives, dominated by Jefferson's party, was not yet in office. Federalists still had a House majority, and their votes would decide the winner.

The Federalists were divided. Some feared Jefferson so much that they decided to back Burr. Others, such as Alexander Hamilton, considered Burr an unreliable man and urged the election of Jefferson.

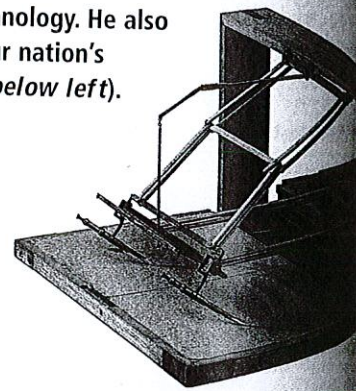
TECHNOLOGY of the TIME

Thomas Jefferson had a passion for invention and technology. He also had classical tastes that are reflected in the look of our nation's capital and his plan of Monticello, his Virginia house (*below left*).

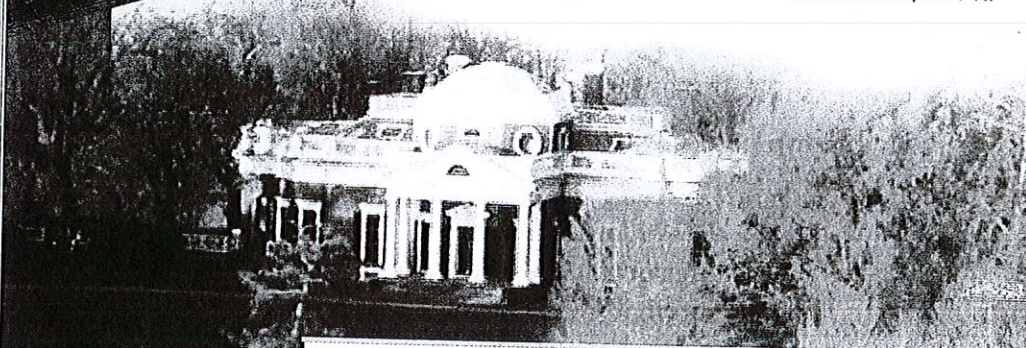
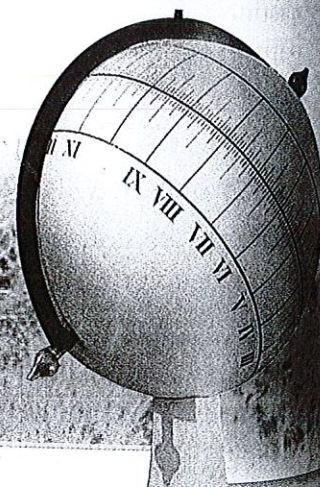
(*left*) Jefferson developed this **wheel cipher** to send and receive messages in secret code.



(*right*) Jefferson improved the design of this early **copy machine**. As he wrote with one pen, a second pen made an exact copy.



(*below right*) A reproduction of a **sundial** designed by Jefferson is in place on the North Terrace of Monticello. The equator is tilted at an angle based on the location's latitude, 38°1'N.



CRITICAL THINKING

1. **Make Generalizations** What do Jefferson's inventions tell about him?
2. **Connect to Today** What modern technology might appeal to Jefferson?

Hamilton did not like Jefferson, but he believed that Jefferson would do more for the good of the nation than Burr. "If there be a man in the world I ought to hate," he said, "it is Jefferson. . . . But the public good must be [more important than] every private consideration."

From February 11 to February 17, the House voted 35 times without a winner. Finally, Alexander Hamilton's friend James A. Bayard persuaded several Federalists not to vote for Burr. On the thirty-sixth ballot, Jefferson was elected president. Aaron Burr became vice president.

People were overjoyed by Jefferson's election. His many achievements and talents went beyond politics. He was a skilled violinist, amateur scientist, and devoted reader. His book collection later became the core of the Library of Congress. In addition, Jefferson's deep interest in the architecture of ancient Greece and Rome is reflected in the architecture of the nation's capital.

▲ SUMMARIZE Explain how the election of 1800 was resolved.

Jefferson and Democracy

▼ KEY QUESTION How did Jefferson's policies differ from those of the Federalists?

On inauguration day, no guards, no coach, not even a horse waited at the door for Thomas Jefferson. He strolled through Washington, D.C., accompanied by a few friends. As Americans would learn in the months to come, Jefferson's humble behavior on inauguration day reflected his ideas about government.

Jefferson's View of Government The new president's first order of business was to heal political wounds. He urged political enemies to unite as Americans.

PRIMARY SOURCE

“Let us, then, fellow-citizens, unite with one heart and one mind. . . . Every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. . . . We are all Republicans, we are all Federalists.”

—Thomas Jefferson, First Inaugural Address

One way Jefferson sought to unify Americans was by promoting a common way of life. He wanted the United States to remain a nation of small independent farmers. Such a nation, he believed, would uphold the strong morals and democratic ideals he associated with country living. Jefferson also hoped that the enormous amount of land available in the United States would prevent Americans from crowding into cities, as so many people had in Europe.

Jefferson wanted to avoid having too much government. He believed that the power of the central government should be limited, and that the people should be enabled to govern themselves. Some of the changes he made during his presidency reflect these beliefs.

Connecting History

Change & Continuity

Americans' concerns about overcrowding grew during the first half of the eighteenth century. You will see this theme develop in later chapters when you study the emergence of industry and the effects of immigration.



Marbury v. Madison (1803)

KEY ISSUE Judicial review

KEY PEOPLE John Adams
Thomas Jefferson
James Madison
William Marbury

president 1797–1801; appointed Federalists as judges
president 1801–1809; Democratic-Republican
secretary of state to President Jefferson
Federalist financier; appointed as justice by President Adams



History Makers

John Marshall

1755–1835

John Marshall was the fourth chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Marshall set out to make the judiciary a force to be reckoned with.

In 1803, in the case of *Marbury v. Madison*, Marshall upheld the power of judicial review. Many other rulings during Marshall's tenure as chief justice also strengthened federal power over the states.

Jefferson and Madison were angry when Marshall claimed this power for the Court, but they could hardly fight his decision. After all, *Marbury v. Madison* was decided in their favor.



ONLINE BIOGRAPHY

For more on John Marshall, go to the Research & Writing Center @ ClassZone.com

The Case

President John Adams appointed William Marbury to be a justice of the peace. However, Adams's term as president ended before the appointment papers were delivered to Marbury. After Thomas Jefferson took office, he named James Madison as secretary of state. Normally it would have been Madison's job to deliver appointment papers, but Jefferson ordered Madison not to deliver Marbury's papers.

Marbury then sued. He asked the Supreme Court to order Madison to deliver the papers.

The Court's Decision Marbury based his demand on two sections of the Judiciary Act of 1789. One section of that law created federal judgeships. Another section named the Supreme Court to settle disputes about certain judicial appointments.

The Supreme Court decided that the Judiciary Act was an invalid law. When Congress passed the Judiciary Act it gave a new power to the Supreme Court. But the Constitution does not allow Congress to do that. As Chief Justice John Marshall wrote, if the Constitution is to be the supreme law of the land, then any law contrary to the Constitution "is not law."

Historical Impact This was the first time the Supreme Court exercised the power of judicial review by overruling a law passed by Congress. Until this time, the Supreme Court was thought of as virtually powerless. That changed after Marshall proclaimed, "It is emphatically the province and the duty of the judicial department to say what the law is." Marshall's decision strengthened the Constitution's system of checks and balances by affirming an important power of the courts.

By upholding judicial review, Marshall helped to create a lasting balance among the three branches of government. The strength of this balance would be tested as the United States grew.

CRITICAL THINKING Summarize Explain how John Marshall strengthened the Supreme Court.

Jefferson and the Federalists Jefferson wanted the government to have less power than it had under the Federalists. He reduced the number of federal employees and the size of the military, and sought to end Federalist programs. Congress, now controlled by Democratic-Republicans, let the Alien and Sedition Acts end. Jefferson released prisoners convicted under the acts. Congress also ended many taxes, such as the unpopular whiskey tax.

Next, Jefferson made changes to Federalist financial policies. Alexander Hamilton had created a system that depended on a certain amount of public debt. Hamilton believed that people who were owed money by their government would make sure the government was run properly. But Jefferson opposed public debt. He used revenues from tariffs and land sales to reduce the amount of money owed by the government.

Conflict with the Courts Although Jefferson ended many Federalist programs, he had little power over the courts. Under the **Judiciary Act of 1801**, Adams had appointed as many Federalist judges as he could between the election of 1800 and Jefferson's inauguration. Because judges were appointed for life, Jefferson could do little about Federalist control of the courts.

Under Chief Justice **John Marshall**, the Supreme Court upheld federal authority and strengthened federal courts. In 1803, in *Marbury v. Madison*, Marshall affirmed the principle of **judicial review**—the final authority of the Supreme Court on the meaning of the Constitution. (See page 342.)

- ▲ **COMPARE AND CONTRAST** Explain how Jefferson's policies differed from those of the Federalists.



Section Assessment



ONLINE QUIZ

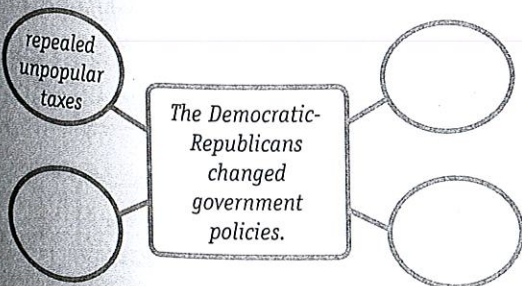
For test practice, go to
Interactive Review @ ClassZone.com

TERMS & NAMES

1. Explain the significance of
- Thomas Jefferson
 - John Marshall
 - Judiciary Act of 1801
 - judicial review

USING YOUR READING NOTES

2. **Main Ideas and Details** Complete the chart you started at the beginning of this section.



KEY IDEAS

3. What was unusual about the election of 1800?
4. Why did Jefferson seek unity between political parties?
5. What is the lasting importance of *Marbury v. Madison*?

CRITICAL THINKING

6. **Compare and Contrast** In what ways did the Federalists and Democratic-Republicans differ?
7. **Analyze Point of View** Why do you think Jefferson wished to promote a modest lifestyle?
8. **Causes and Effects** How did Adams's last-minute appointments affect the new president?
9. **Technology** Research Thomas Jefferson's interests. Design an Internet page about Jefferson that shows his inventions or a building he designed.